

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 143441

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EXDIS, GEORGETOWN PLEASE PASS UNDER SECRETARY HABIB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, KS, US

SUBJECT: ADMIRAL TURNER APPEARANCE BEFORE SFRC ON KOREA
TROOP WITHDRAWALS

REF: STATE 135539

1. ADMIRAL TURNER APPEARED BEFORE SFRC AT ITS REQUEST
TO GIVE BRIEFING ON NORTH-SOUTH FORCE BALANCE AND RISKS OF
U.S. GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWALS. FOLLOWING BRIEF ACCOUNT IS
BASED ON NOTES TAKEN BY DEPARTMENT OFFICER PRESENT AT
SESSION.

2. BRIEFING CENTERED ON PRM FORCE BALANCE ANNEX, AND
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IT AND ORAL CIA BRIEFING GIVEN TO
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SFRC EARLIER (REFTEL). AFTER BRIEFING,THOSE SENATORS WHO
HAD BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT STRENGTH OF NORTH AND WISDOM OF
TROOP WITHDRAWALS MAINTAINED THEIR EARLIER POSITIONS.
SENATORS CASE AND PERCY NOTED THAT THE TURNER BRIEFING
WAS AT ODDS WITH ORAL BRIEFING AND RESULTANT CONFLICT HAD
TO BE CLEARED UP. SENATOR GLENN SUGGESTED THAT THE
PRESIDENT'S CAMPAIGN PLEDGE TO WITHDRAW THE GROUND TROOPS

HAD SERVED AS THE PREMISE FOR THE PRM AND QUESTIONED WHETHER THIS WAS A WISE WAY TO MAKE POLICY. ADMIRAL TURNER SAID THAT THE OFFICIAL WITHDRAWAL DECISION HAD BEEN BASED

ON THE PRM STUDY, THE FORCE-BALANCE PICTURE AND ON EXTENSIVE NSC DISCUSSIONS.

3. SENATORS PERCY AND GLENN FOCUSED ON REACTIONS OF OUR ALLIES TO WITHDRAWAL DECISION. BOTH FELT THAT DECISION WAS HIGHLY UNWELCOME IN ASIA. SUGGESTING THAT DIPLOMATIC REACTIONS TO OUR MOVE MIGHT NOT BE TOTALLY RELIABLE, PERCY ASKED FOR INDEPENDENT CIA ANALYSIS OF ACTUAL ASIAN VIEWS.

4. SENATOR STONE SAID THAT COMPLEX MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN ISSUE MADE IT ADVISABLE FOR SENATE AND HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEES TO HOLD HEARINGS ON WITHDRAWAL DECISION.

5. IN BRIEF MEETING WITH PRESS FOLLOWING SESSION, SENATOR SPARKMAN SAID THAT SFRC INTENDED TO MOVE SLOWLY AND DELIBERATELY ON WITHDRAWAL ISSUE, WHICH WAS NOT IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION.

6. WE WILL BE UPDATING MATERIALS FOR HABIB/BROWN JUNE 24 SESSION WITH SFRC IN LIGHT OF TURNER TESTIMONY AND BYRD AMENDMENT. VANCE
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